

Remarks on Efforts To Assist Students and School Districts Displaced by Hurricane Katrina
September 6, 2005

The President. Laura and I just had a good visit with Secretary of Education Spellings and her team about the—about the school children who have been displaced because of Hurricane Katrina. You know, this is a time when a lot of families are looking forward to sending their child back to school, and their children are excited about school. But a lot of those dreams and a lot of that excitement has been upset for a lot of students because of the storm.

Yesterday we went to a shelter in Baton Rouge and met a lot of little kids, many of whom are starting school in Baton Rouge. And it's indicative of what's taking place across the country. A lot of school districts are taking in these children who have had to leave their homes and their local districts. And we want to thank the schools and the school districts and the teachers and the PTAs for reaching out and doing their duty.

We spent time talking about how to help States absorb the costs. And Margaret is working on a plan that we'll announce to the country after a while. The other thing that—and by the way, they're going to set up a web page tomorrow that will enable people from around the country to be able to access the Department of Education web page to determine how they can help these school districts that are bringing in the new students.

As well, yesterday, when Laura and I were in Mississippi, I ran into a young pharmacy student that had been going to Xavier in New Orleans. And Xavier is one of our great universities, and she was so excited about going to school and had to come back home because of the hurricane. And she was concerned and worried.

One of the things that people can be assured of is that, one, we're reaching out

to other universities to encourage them to accept students, and many are. And we will—there will be loan forbearance and loan extensions. In other words, the Department of Education will help those who have—are dependent upon student loans, will help them be able to finance their education, will help them—if they're not going to go back to school—and we hope they do, but if they choose not to, there will be a loan forbearance. In other words, this Education Department of ours is going to be flexible.

I'm confident that this Government of ours will be able to help the local school districts, and I'm confident that the local school districts will still want to maintain a high standard of excellence and make sure every child learns to read and write and add and subtract.

Laura is going down to DeSoto County, Mississippi, to comfort the folks there and to let them know the Federal Government is aware of the problems when it comes to education and that we will step up and assume our responsibility to make sure every single child in this country gets a good education.

And again, I want to thank the local school districts all around the country who are making extraordinary efforts to make sure that the children who have been upset by this hurricane are able to find some comfort and some solace in the midst of their anguish by being able to go to a school.

Thank you all.

Q. Can you take a question on energy, sir?

Q. When is the First Lady going, sir?
The President. Thursday.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:04 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. The Of-

fice of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks at the Funeral Service for Chief Justice of the United States
William H. Rehnquist
September 7, 2005

Jim and Janet and Nancy; members of the Rehnquist family; colleagues of the Chief Justice:

This afternoon the people of the United States mourn the passing of the leader of a branch of the Government, the eight Justices of the Court pay final homage to their Chief and friend, and a loving family bids farewell to a kind and gentle soul.

William Hubbs Rehnquist accomplished many things in his good life and rose to high places. And we remember the integrity and the sense of duty that he brought to every task before him. That character was clear in the young man of 18 who signed up for the Army Air Corps during the Second World War. The Nation saw that character in his more than three decades of service on our highest Court. And the Nation saw it again last January the 20th, when the Chief Justice made his way onto the Inaugural platform. Many will never forget the sight of this man, weakened by illness, rise to his full height and say in a strong voice, "Raise your right hand, Mr. President, and repeat after me."

It was more than a half-century ago that Bill Rehnquist first came to the Supreme Court as a law clerk. As he would later recount the story, he made that trip from Milwaukee in the middle of the winter in an old blue Studebaker with no heater. He recalled that as he began the journey, he patted that car and thought, "Don't let me down, baby."

After a year-and-a-half in the Chambers of Justice Robert Jackson, Bill Rehnquist left DC and headed for Phoenix with an even greater love for the law and with

something more, a beautiful fiancée named Natalie Cornell. She would share his walk in life for nearly 40 years. All who knew the Chief know how he cherished Nan and their time together and how much he missed his wife in the years without her.

In every chapter of his life, William Rehnquist stood apart for his powerful intellect and clear convictions. In a profession that values disciplined thought and persuasive ability, a talent like his gets noticed in a hurry. Still in his forties, he became the 100th Justice of the Supreme Court, and one of the youngest in modern times.

After he moved to the center chair, William Rehnquist led the Court for nearly two decades and earned a place among our greatest chief justices. He built consensus through openness and collegiality. He was a distinguished scholar of the Constitution and a superb administrator of the judicial conference. He understood the role of a judge and the place of courts in our constitutional system. He was prudent in exercising judicial power and firm in defending judicial independence.

On the bench and as a leader of the Federal courts, Chief Justice Rehnquist was always a calm and steady presence. In his thinking and in his bearing, he personified the ideal of fairness, and people could sense it. Inside the Court, no man could have been a finer steward of the institution, its customs, and its history.

As long as William Rehnquist was presiding, colleagues and advocates knew that the proceedings would be orderly, on time, businesslike, and occasionally humorous. Once during an oral argument, a lawyer